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AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS OF EAST CHINA

Summary: East China presented a new aspect in 1951 in the fields of crop production, supplementary industries, purchasing power of the peasants, educational, and cultural advance. In all these fields there have been notable advances over preliberation days and even over 1950. In the Huai Ho basin, conservancy measures have greatly increased crops; in Shantung, 80 percent of the peasants are now classed as middle peasants. Throughout the East China Administrative Region attendance at both adult and regular schools has shown great increase.

In 1951, grain production in the East China Administrative Region was increased 16.34 percent over 1950, cotton 49.64 percent, kenafe 93.8 percent. The tobacco area was increased 475.35 percent. This was the best production in from 10 to 20 years. Rice production in the Shanghai area ran from 600 catties per mou one catty equals 1 1/3 pound and one mou equals 1/6 acre for ordinary seed to 1,012 catties per mou for selected seed. No such yields have ever been seen before in this area.

In the Huai-yin Special Administrative District of the formerly annually flooded Huai Ho basin, 2 billion catties of grain were produced in 1951, a 150 percent increase over 1950. In the Su Hsien Special Administrative District production was 100 percent over 1950. Some areas in North Anhwei which had not had a full crop in 8 years had both spring and fall crops in 1951.

The purchasing power of the peasants in 1951 averaged 50 percent over that of 1950. In Shantung, 80 percent of the peasants are middle-class peasants and now have an annual operating surplus. In Chekiang, peasant purchasing power in 1951 was 63 percent over 1950, or from 95 catties of rice in 1949 to 250 catties in 1951, a 257 percent increase in 2 years. The sales of rice in certain mountainous areas in 1951 were three times those in 1950. In Chi-mo Hsien, Shantum the people are shifting from a principal diet of vegetable leaves and dried sweet potatoes to rice. The consumption of salt, rice, and pork throughout East China is steadily increasing.

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Cultural centers are being opened in most areas and opera troupes are springing up everywhere. Winter schools enrolled 7 million students in the 1950 - 1951 winter. Three million are enrolled in year-round schools. This is three times the preliminary estimates. Nearly 2 million of these students are in Shantung, 360,000 in South Kiangsu. Primary schools in East China numbered 109,000 in 1951, 18 percent over 1950. The enrollment was 9,440,000, 28 percent over 1950.

In South Anhwei, school enrollment has increased to 234,000, twice that of preliberation days. Over 80 percent of the schools are operated by the local authorities with government aid. Primary and middle schools in Shantung more than double those of pre-liberation days. Children of working people constitute over 90 percent of enrollment. -- I Chiu

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